

PSYCHOLOGY 461 IMAGINATION- Fall 2011

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Office hours: Monday 1:00-3:00PM or by appointment **in Straub 390**

Lecture time and place: Tuesday and Thursday 8:30-9:50AM; 142 Straub

Course website: <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>

You must have an UO email address and be registered for this course in order to log on to Blackboard. If you do not have an UO email address, go to the Information Technology Center (ITC) in 151 McKenzie Hall or <http://it.uoregon.edu/services-grid/all>. If you are having difficulty with Blackboard, you can find help here: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/cmet/consulting/>

Overview: Imagination refers to the capacity to mentally transcend time, place, and/or circumstance to think about what might have been, plan and anticipate the future, create fictional worlds, and consider remote and close alternatives to actual experiences. This multi-faceted capacity emerges in early childhood and is fundamental to human thought throughout life. The study of imagination crosscuts traditional areas in psychology and extends into other fields as well (e.g., philosophy, literature). In this course we will examine how psychologists think about and study human imagination, covering topics such as pretend play in children, counterfactual reasoning, imagery, mental time travel, creativity, consciousness, fiction, dreaming, mental illness, and the impact of technology on concepts of self and identity.

Note to Psychology majors: This course can be used to count towards the required upper division credits from List S (Social Science area). It cannot be used to count for List C (Science area).

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

The most enjoyable courses are those in which everyone comes to class well prepared and makes thoughtful contributions to the discussion. To enhance the quality of discussion, everyone should read the assigned material **before** the relevant class meeting. To encourage you to do so, students are required to post comments, questions and/or reactions to the readings on our Blackboard web site by 3:00PM the day before each class (unless otherwise stated). You will be graded on your posted comments (each post is worth 5 points). To receive the full number of points, a posted comment should be at least a paragraph long and the content should provide evidence that the student has read and thought about the assigned articles (if there are two or more assigned readings, you are required to comment on all of them - it is not sufficient to comment on only one reading). You are reading for knowledge and your post should explore the ideas in the articles you have read. It is also recommended that you bring a copy of your comment to class each day to remind yourself what you wrote, so that you can add to the discussion during class.

Your class attendance will be worth 3 points per class. To receive the full score you need to arrive on time, be an active part of the class (i.e., not surfing the web or texting, not sleeping),

and stay until the end of class. Students sometimes miss class due to sickness or other reasons. The quality of your posts and contributions to class discussions will be taken into account when assigning your grade for class participation. Thus you can make up for a missed class by taking an active part in other class meetings. On the other hand if you never speak up in class and your posts consistently reflect a superficial reading of the material, your grade for this part of the course will be reduced.

Total = 150 points: 80 points for posts, 57 points for attendance and 13 points for consistently strong contribution to posts or class meetings

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Based on your preferences, you will be assigned to a discussion group. The list of group topics below is tentative and might be adjusted if there is not sufficient interest in one or more of the groups. The group assignments will be announced on the second day of class. Each group will meet once a week (at a time of the group's choosing, but also sometimes during class) to discuss a book that you will be reading together, discuss a group activity that everyone in the group will work on, work on a group project (i.e., a mini research project based on your group activity), plan a presentation to the class, and choose a reading related to your group project that the entire class will read. Your attendance at group meetings and contributions to the discussion of the book and development of the project and class presentation will be part of your grade for the course. In addition, each student will turn in an evaluation of the book that the group read. Topics and assigned book:

Creativity (two or three groups)

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. New York: Harper Collins.

Dreaming (two or three groups)

Rock, A. (2004). *The mind at night: The new science of how and why we dream*. New York: Basic Books.

Group roles and responsibilities

Note: Blackboard Discussion groups will be set up to provide a forum for communicating with the other students in your discussion group.

Discussion leaders (2 students)

Make a schedule for what should be discussed at each group meeting (e.g., chapters of book, group activity, group article, group project, etc.); keep group on task during meetings; take attendance and notes about what happened at each meeting; schedule a meeting with the instructor to report on group discussions; turn in meeting notes and discussion summary by deadline.

Project leaders (2 - 4 students)

Schedule a meeting with the instructor during the second week of classes to plan the group project and activity; explain the project and activity to the group and lead discussion about modifications; work out project design details and create any data sheets or other handouts as

necessary; schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss the results of the project; submit a short summary of the project (purpose, method, results & discussion) by deadline.

Presentation leaders (2 – 4 students)

Plan the class presentation and take the primary roles in the presentation; collect feedback from group members about the plan; schedule a meeting with the instructor to present the plan for the presentation (including Power Points); give the presentation to the class on scheduled day.

Evaluation of the book (all students)

All the students in each group will read the assigned book and complete an evaluation of the book. It is not acceptable to split up the chapters of the book amongst the group members.

The expectation is that all group members will contribute to every part of the group requirements, although there will be division of labor for the primary roles. Drafts of schedules for the groups will be provided at the first group meeting; additional meetings can be scheduled as needed/desired. After the group has presented to the class, each member of the group will provide confidential evaluations of the other group members' contributions to the group meetings, performance in group role, discussion of the book and group activity, participation in the group project and activity, and class presentation.

Evaluation of your contributions by other group members and instructor (e.g., attendance at meetings, participation in group discussions, performance in assigned role, participation in group activity and project, etc.)

40 points

Completion of your evaluations of other group members (you must include commentary as well as number ratings to get full points)

10 points

Written work (i.e., project summary for project leaders, discussion summary for discussion leaders) or class presentation (for presentation leaders)

20 points

Written evaluation of book

20 points

Overall Group score (for all group members; based on overall quality of group work)

10 points

Total = 100

PAPER

Students will write a paper in which they summarize the research findings addressing an important question about the psychology of imagination (about 10 to 12 pages). Papers must be written individually and in your own words (i.e., you will NOT be writing your papers with your discussion group mates). It is recommended (but not required) that you pick a topic that is related to the topic of your group presentation. (The reading you do for your paper will be great preparation for your project and classroom presentation.)

This course is designed to help develop your writing skills. For this reason, there are several deadlines associated with your review paper. Failure to meet deadlines 1, 2, and 3 will result in forfeiting the points indicated below and you will not have the opportunity to receive feedback on your proposal/draft. Late papers will be marked down substantially; the exact number of points that you will lose will depend on how late the paper is and why it is late. All assignments are due by the beginning of class.

1. **Thursday, October 13:** Submit a ½- to 1-page proposal for your review paper. This will help me make sure that your topic is appropriate for this assignment and allow me to give you some feedback about possible sources of information. **(5 points)**
2. **Tuesday, November 8:** Submit a first draft (hard copy) of your review paper to be read by another student. I will collect these papers, remove the cover pages with names, and then on Thursday, November 10, I will pass out these papers (with no identifying information) to students in the class for written feedback. Thus, on November 10, everyone who turned in a paper on November 8 will be given a paper by another student to review. In the past, some students have turned in “papers” at this stage that were little more than outlines -- not finished enough to allow another student to edit and give feedback. You will not receive the full number of points if your paper is not a reasonable draft (at least 7 pages). In some cases, your paper might be returned to you and you will not be given another student’s paper to review. Note that the more complete your paper is, the more help the student will be able to give you. **(15 points).**
3. **Thursday, November 17:** Submit your written feedback plus the edited paper **(10 points).** On Tuesday, November 22, I will give you back your own review paper, along with the peer review.
4. **Wednesday, December 7 by 8:00 AM:** Submit your final paper to SafeAssign on Blackboard. **(120 points)**

Total for paper: 150 points

Final grades will be based on the following:

Class Attendance and Participation	150 points
Discussion Group	100 points
Paper	<u>150 points</u>
Total:	400 points

Grades: It is sometimes difficult for students to figure out what to expect for a grade in a course that has no exams, lots of little scores, points for participation, etc. For example, students who come to class every lecture and post their comments regularly tend to expect to receive an A. While it is true that it is difficult for students to get an A without doing those things, students who do not do a good job on their written work will not receive an A in this course.

Academic Honesty: All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. No form of cheating or plagiarism will be tolerated. Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the

source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate and specific references. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks and properly cited. Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. In addition, it is plagiarism to submit work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor. If cheating is discovered on the assignments, then the University will be notified and appropriate action will be taken (e.g., receiving a score of 0 on the assignment, failing the class).

In addition to turning in a hard copy of your written assignments, you may be required to submit it/them to SafeAssign. This technology will be used to prevent plagiarism, protect the originality of student work, ensure a level playing field, and make you more aware of and knowledgeable about plagiarism. When you submit papers, they are checked against SafeAssign's comprehensive databases of source material (which includes published sources, websites, other students' papers, etc.). The papers are then delivered to me, along with reports about how original the papers statistically appear to be.

For more information about the University of Oregon's Student Conduct Code and the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly and the following website: <http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>. Violations of the Student Conduct Code will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor **before** you complete any relevant requirements of the course.

Accommodations: If one of the following applies to you, please see the instructor as soon as possible to make adjustments. You are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Services (346-1155) if you have a non-documented condition that creates difficulty for you as a student.

- Documented learning or medical disability

- Non-documented need for adjustments to help you learn

- On a sports team that travels this quarter

- English is not your first language

With advanced planning, adjustments are relatively straightforward. Adjustments at the last minute can be problematic and sometimes are not possible.

OUTLINE OF LECTURE TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS
(Subject to change)

****Assignment for every day that readings are assigned: Post comments, questions, and/or reactions to the readings by 3:00PM the day before each class (unless otherwise specified).**

- Sept. 27 Introduction to the study of imagination
No required reading or post.
- Sept. 29 The development of imagination
Gopnik, A. (2009). *The Philosophical Baby: What children's minds tell us about truth, love and the meaning of life*, Ch.1, pp 19-46. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
Wenner, M. (2009). The serious need for play. *Scientific American Mind*, 20, 22-29.
- Oct. 4 Interactions with invisible others
Caughey, J. L. (1984). *Imaginary social worlds: A cultural approach*, Chapter 2, 31-76. Lincoln Nebraska: University of Nebraska.
Taylor, M., Shawber, A. B., & Mannering, A. M. (2009). Children's imaginary companions: What is it like to have an invisible friend? In K. Markman, W. Klein, & J. Suhr (Eds.) *The handbook of imagination and mental simulation* (pp. 211-224). New York: Psychology Press.
- Oct. 6 Imagination and emotion
Harris, P. L. (2000). *The work of the imagination*, Chapter 4, pp 58-93. Oxford UK; Oxford University Press.
Sayfan, L., & Lagattuta, K. H. (2009). Scaring the monster away: What children know about managing fears of real and imaginary creatures. *Child Development*, 80, 1756-1774.
- Oct. 11 Narrative and fiction
Mar, R. A. , & Oatley, K. (2008). The function of fiction is the abstraction and simulation of social experience. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3, 173-192.
Mar, R. A., Oatley, K., Hirsh, J., Paz, J., & Peterson, J. B. (2006). Bookworms versus nerds: Exposure to fiction versus non-fiction, divergent associations with social ability, and the simulation of fictional social worlds. *Journal of Research in Personality* 40, 694-712.
- Oct. 13 Mind wandering and mental time travel
Smallwood, J., & Schooler, J. W. (2006). The restless mind. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132, 946-958.
Suddendorf, T., & Corballis, M. C. (2007). The evolution of foresight: What is mental time travel and is it unique to humans? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.
Assignment Due: Paper Proposal

- Oct. 18 Memory and imagination
 Hyman, I. E., & James, F. (1998). Individual differences and the creation of false childhood memories. *Memory*, 6, 1-20.
 Pezdek, K., Blandon-Gitlin, I., & Gabbay (2006). Imagination and memory: Does imagining implausible events lead to false autobiographical memories? *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 13, 764-769.
- Oct. 20 Counterfactual reasoning
 Byrne, R. M. J. (2005). *The rational imagination: How people create alternates to reality*. Chs. 1 and 2. London, UK: Bradford.
- Oct. 25 Creativity
 Lubart, T. I. (2000-2001). Models of the creative process: Past, present and future. *Creativity Research Journal*, 13, 295-308.
 Simonton, D. K. (2007). Creativity: Specialized expertise or general cognitive processes? In M. J. Roberts (Ed.) *Integrating the mind*, pp. 351-367. New York: Psychology Press.
- Oct. 27 Creativity
 Film: Sketches of Frank Gehry.
No required reading or post.
- Nov. 1 Mental illness, creativity and imagination – Guest lecture by Candee Mottweiler
 Andreasen, N. C. (1987). Creativity and mental illness: Prevalence rates in writers and their first-degree relatives. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 144, 1288-1292.
 2nd reading TBA
- Nov. 3 Autism and imagination
 Scott, F. J. (in press). The development of imagination in children with autism. In M. Taylor (Ed.) *The development of imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.
 Scott, F. J., & Baron-Cohen, S. (1996). Imagining real and unreal things: Evidence of a dissociation in autism. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 8, 371-382.
- Nov. 8 Neurological disorders of the imagination
 Film: Secrets of the Mind.
No required reading or post.
 Optional reading: Hirstein, W. (2005). *Brain fiction: Self-deception and the riddle of confabulation*. Ch. 1 pp. 1-23. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Assignment Due: First Draft of Paper
- Nov. 10 Supernatural beliefs and magical thinking
 Frazier, B.N., Gelman, S.A., Wilson, A., & Hood, B. M. (2009). Picasso paintings, moon rocks, and hand-written Beatle's lyrics: Adults' evaluations of authentic objects. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 9, 1-14.
 2nd reading TBA

- Nov. 15 Virtual worlds
 Film: Digital Nation
 Barnett, J., & Coulson, M. (2010). Virtually real: A psychological perspective on
 Massively Multiplayer Online Games. *Review of General Psychology*, 14, 167-
 179.
 2nd reading TBA
- Nov. 17 Dreaming
 Film: What are Dreams?
 Required reading: Nir, Y., & Tononi, G. (2010). Dreaming and the brain: From
 phenomenology to neurophysiology. *Trends in Cognitive Science*, 14, 88-100.
 Optional reading 1: Klösch, G., & Kraft, U. (2005). Sweet dreams are made of this.
 Scientific American Mind, 16, 38-45.
 Optional reading 2: Szegedy-Maszak, M. (2006). What dreams are made of. *U.S. News
 & World Report*, 140, 54-64.
 Assignment Due: Peer Review of Student Paper
- Nov. 22 Group presentations
 Readings to be assigned by students
 Posts are due by 9:00AM on Nov. 21
 **Assignments due (ONLY if your group is presenting on this day): Meeting notes
 and discussion summary (one copy per group), summary of project (one copy
 per group), individual book evaluation (one copy per student)**
- Nov. 24 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
- Nov. 29 Group presentations
 Readings to be assigned by students
 Posts are due by 9:00AM on Nov. 28
 **Assignments due (ONLY if your group is presenting on this day): Meeting notes
 and discussion summary (one copy per group), summary of project (one copy
 per group), individual book evaluation (one copy per student)**
- Dec. 1 Group presentations and class wrap-up
 Readings to be assigned by students
 Posts are due by 9:00AM on Nov. 30
 **Assignments due (ONLY if your group is presenting on this day): Meeting notes
 and discussion summary (one copy per group), summary of project (one copy
 per group), individual book evaluation (one copy per student)**
- Wednesday, Dec. 7 **Assignment due: Final paper (submit it to SafeAssign on Blackboard
 by 8:00 AM)**